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Request for Approval of the California Environmental Quality Act Responsible Agency Findings and Grant Award for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board consider the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Addendum for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2, prepared by the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District as the Lead Agency in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and adopt Resolution 2018-04 which finds that all necessary mitigation measures have been included in the project to eliminate any significant effects on the environment, and that no additional mitigation measures within the Board's authority are necessary.

Contingent upon the adoption of the Responsible Agency Findings, staff recommends that the Board approve a grant award of \$999,293.01 to American Rivers for the Three Creek Parkway Restoration Project #2 and authorize the Executive Officer to execute a grant agreement.

Recommendation Description

The Board reserved \$999,318 for the project at the March 28, 2018 Board meeting, as part of the Conservancy's third Proposition 1 grant cycle. The Board reserved funding until October 1, 2018 to allow the project proponents to complete additional CEQA analysis as needed, and to clear the other conditions placed on the award (see the Proposition 1 Grant Program Update for more information on conditions). The project proponents have completed the CEQA process and fulfilled all other conditions on this grant, and Conservancy staff is ready to move into the grant agreement negotiation process.

In September 2016, the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, as the Lead Agency, made findings of no significant effect, and adopted the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration, including the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #1. In November 2016, the Delta Conservancy Board, as a Responsible Agency, made findings of no significant effect, and adopted the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration, including the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #1. In December 2017 the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, as the Lead Agency, completed a CEQA addendum for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2. The completed addendum indicates no additional CEQA analysis is required because the effects of the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 are within the scope of the CEQA document that was prepared for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #1 and that the amended Project will have no new or additional impacts or other conditions that would trigger supplemental or subsequent analysis under CEQA guidelines (California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15162).

The Delta Conservancy, as a Responsible Agency, has reviewed these documents and findings, and staff recommends that the Board make Responsible Agency Findings concluding that all necessary mitigation measures have been included in the project to eliminate significant effects on the environment. Staff further recommends that the Delta Conservancy approve the requested grant and authorize the Executive Officer to execute the grant agreement.

Project Background

The Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 (#Prop 1-1711), submitted by American Rivers, is an implementation project with the goal of restoring the denuded Marsh Creek flood control channel to a healthy corridor of riparian habitat. To accomplish this goal, the flood control channel will be excavated to increase flood conveyance and create a floodplain bench, and then the area will be planted with native vegetation in the form of grass and forb, shrub, and tree layers. These activities will result in increased habitat for native wildlife species and improved water quality.

The Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 (#Prop 1-1711) will complement the Three Creeks Parkways Restoration Project #1 (#Prop 1-Y1-2015-009), approved by the Board as part of the Conservancy's first Proposition 1 grant cycle. The Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project #2 will add 1 acre of riparian floodplain to the existing project boundary, increase the length of creek bank restored by 500 linear feet, and improve storm water management. These additions increase the previously funded restoration project which will restore 12.5 acres along 7,500 linear creek bank feet (3,500 on the west bank, and 4,000 on the east bank).

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